177. Villager .. Short story.
53 Are we seeing aright? .. Attack on prolonged nat-festivals at
204 pagodas, as endangering physical
538 and moral welfare of people, including attack on worldly members of monkhood.

541 Horse-racing in Rangoon was a foreign importation, but nevertheless
177. the stadium was always filled, not only with the fashionable section in an
54 enclosure but also with rows of four-anna spectators who had been col-
369 lected from all the streets of the town by the privately-run Burmese buses which tore along on race days, with two "spares" (spare-men in addition to the driver) hanging out from the back step and shouting to all they passed: "Race-a-ko, Race-a-ko! Race-course, race-course." But in the country the traditional boat racing was still alive. Boat races were held in every village which had a stream or river, as an annual event after the Lenten season. Long narrow canoes built in the village itself were rowed by twenty-two men and put out in rivalry between quarter and quarter, or between one village and another. At Ye the upper street and lower street put out boats bearing names of prowess or aquatic grace. The cheering and betting raged more furious and wild with the manner of the finish: the winning post was a boat in the centre of the stream, equidistant from the tracks of each boat, and across this was laid a hollow cane sticking about three feet out on either side. Through the hollow was thrust the prize *pan*: flower (of victory), a stick with a flag on each end. The winning crew was to seize this flower before it could be called victorious, and thus a dead-heat often sent both crews tumbling into the water as they wrestled for the prize.

•525 Burmans are said to have an irrepressible gambling spirit, even when no money is laid on. A stock example quoted by foreigners of the Burman's readiness with a dah in his hot temper, gives as provocation the anger worked up between two men who sit idly in a tea-shop, and for lack of amusement bet on the number of flies which will settle on the sugar bowl. I prefer the story of two street urchins, who saw two monks walking before them, sedately, with downcast eyes and steady pace, as monks should walk. "Look," says one idle urchin, "there are two hpongyis. You look at the one on the right, I'll watch the one the left. I bet you my hpongyi walks faster than your hpongyi." The monks ignore this, but soon begin to hear: "My holiness is going faster!" "No' mind!" Unobtrusively, each hpongyi tries to walk quicker and yet with dignity. The boys get thoroughly excited now. "*My* holiness!". "No, *my* holiness!" Soon the astonished spectators see two hpongyis

running with unholy energy and two small boys streaking after them shouting: "My hpongyi! Hey, my hpongyi!" 525

The showy vanity of Rangoon was seen at its greatest at wedding celebrations where no woman of any standing came without a full load of jewellery, either owned or borrowed for the occasion. For weddings of families like ours hundreds of invitations had always to be sent out owing to the tradition of acknowledging distant relationships and connections. It would be considered rude also not to invite the friends among clerks and traders from every town in which my father had been posted during our growing-up years. 585 511

Marriage is a social contract in Burma. To be married one needs no recourse to legal or priestly officers. The *let-htat*, laying of hands one on the other, can be performed in the presence of elders, or a feast can be given to a few people to obtain recognition of the married state. This is done after elopements, for example, when the parents have become reconciled and the young couple is too shy to go through the pantomine of a marriage ceremony. For divorce, also, no legal procedure is necessary, but convention makes divorces rare. Although monogamy is almost universal in Burma, polygamy is not forbidden by the law. A "mistress" of a married man is considered a sort of wife, but the disapproval with which this is regarded is shown in the term applied to her: *ma-ya-nga*, lesser wife. But the liberty operates both ways, and in the rare cases of a woman who runs to a second husband without any agreement having been reached beforehand, she is said to have a *lin-ngè*, lesser husband. The lack of legal safeguards of a woman's position as the only wife is amply compensated for by the rulings of Burmese Buddhist Law as regards her property. She retains sole ownership of whatever property she brings to the marriage, and on the dissolution of the marriage is entitled to half of all the additions of wealth since the marriage. Neither can an irate husband make a will leaving his money to other relatives and strangers. Wills are forbidden by law; children inherit equal shares of the parents' legacy, except in the cases where there are more than four children in the family. Then the eldest takes one-quarter before the rest is divided equally amongst the other children. On the death of one parent the surviving parent still has sole ownership of half the property. The other half is open to division among the children, but it is only a black sheep which will insist on division while one parent is still alive. 581 562 428

When I had been home but a month, my brother appealed to me for help in arranging the matter of his marriage. His difficulty was that he had no wish to marry the various dowried young women with whom my relatives were trying to contract him; he had chosen his own bride but at the same time the stern array of cousins, aunts and uncles in our 584

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boat is called—to make sure that his man will have his proper amount of cane to grasp at. Then both boats get under the bank to avoid the force of the current, and paddle leisurely up to the starting-point, a mile or a mile and a half up the river. 526

The din and bustle on the bank now become greater than ever. Every one is talking and stating his views as to the result of the race, and nobody is listening to him. Betting goes on freely, and the chink of rupees is heard perpetually. It is announced that the sporting English extra assistant-commissioner from the divisional town has given as his opinion that "the fishermen" will win ; they are in better condition and cooler-headed than their opponents, and will win at the finish. There is a minute's dejection at this, and then it is all effaced by the discovery that the Chinese storekeepers have put their "bottom dollars" on the home boat. That is good news, for the Tayôk is a good judge of anything that can be betted about, and it is very seldom that he drops money. So the talk goes on till the last coin is staked. Welshers have not yet been introduced into Burma, and there is now nothing to be done but relieve one's feelings in talk, and puff furiously at big cheroots, with an occasional rush into the water to see how far the boats have got up. Old U Ôn tries to talk to the young Englishman, but it is no use, he can't keep either his mind or his eyes off the boat, and the Ayebaing improves the occasion by attempting a flirtation with the daughter of the house. But he might as well talk to the winds. She is far more excited than her father, and would be dancing about if it were not for the restraint of her old nurse, who is too blear-eyed and rheumatic to be anything but ill-natured. [525] ● 000

But at last there is a hush and every eye is turned up the river. The boats are turning, and come drifting down to the starting-place. There is a minute or two of backing and fussing about so as to get the boats straight and the bows level, and then, with a loud shout, they are off to a start by mutual consent. A roar of pent-up excitement comes from the crowd all the way down the banks to the grand stand and then swings back again like a wave on the flat sea-sand. Served by their magnificent boat and their

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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527 the plays, of which there are three or four, while some unwearied spirits can only find relief for their exultant triumph in yein dances and irresponsible performances of their own.
[273] Till dawn of day the revelry goes on, but there is nothing like drunkenness. It is exceedingly seldom that you see a drunken Burman out of Rangoon, where they claim to be Europeanised. For a couple of days the excitement lasts, and then the strangers wend their way homewards, and the township calms down to its usual quiet. But for years the great event will be talked of at the local feasts, and the Yein choruses of three or four generations will tell of the gallant struggle when the Daungsatpyan beat the Thônpanhla and broke the long supremacy of the Thônkwa rowers.

177.52 526 It is a great pity that these old contests are not kept up with the spirit that used to characterise them. In 1877 the then Chief Commissioner of British Burma, Mr. Rivers Thompson, believing that they led to unrestrained and dangerous gambling, issued an order forbidding all government officials to have anything to do with them, and advising that great races should be discouraged as much as possible. This policy was continued by Mr. Aitchison (late Sir Charles), and there seemed some danger that the art of making fine racing-boats would be lost, while all the fun and jollity of the old ye-pwè, kôn-pwè, land and water sports, were put an end to, without any decrease in the amount of
● 525 [101] gambling. The habit is as engrained with the Burman as with the Chinaman, and if there are no boat-races to bet on there are lots of other things, from pony matches to gônnyin-to, on which sporting votaries might stake their money.
526 177.52 There were still local matches between adjacent villages held, but they were but a sorry imitation of the old festivals, and have unfortunately led to the unpleasant speculations of the West being introduced. "Barneyings," in-and-out rowing, and all the unlovely customs of Western professionalism have sprung up as a consequence of the degradation of the old manly sport. Sir Charles Bernard, who was an ardent athlete himself, did a good deal towards reviving boat-racing. Sports have been held on the Great Royal Lake at Rangoon, it may be hoped only as a preliminary measure to the encouragement of longer contests on

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From the Q.'s pawn to the Q.'s R.'s pawn, the nè are placed on the third square. From the K.'s pawn to the K.'s R.'s pawn, they are placed on the fourth square in direct *échelon*. The first move, therefore, takes a pawn. The pieces may be arranged behind the pawns according to fancy or judgment. The formation represented in the figure is considered the best among Rangoon players.

Either player, however, may adopt another line of battle. He may strengthen either wing, or expose the king, according as he estimates his opponent's abilities, or the peculiarities of his play. In some respects this may be done in such a way as to be tantamount to giving a piece to an inferior player. The pawns, however, never vary in position. The board is a huge thing like an enlarged foot-stool, or a tea-table with rudimentary legs, the players squatting on mats. There is always heavy betting on the games; and when a famous player comes in from the district or over from Maulmein to measure strength with the Rangoon cracks, the excitement is wonderful, and often furnishes occasion for free fights, such as the Burmese, in their sturdy, hot-blooded way, delight in as much as any schoolboy or devotee of town-and-gown rows.

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The Burmese game, as well in the names and powers of the pieces as in the liberty of individual arrangement, is thus, it will be allowed, much more like a real battle than any other recognised form. The elephant is particularly well calculated for defending the king where he is most vulnerable.

War-chariots are decidedly more appropriate to active warfare than castles. Indeed the Briton must acknowledge that the English nomenclature is bad. There was a time certainly when bishops used to buckle on their armour, and charge across the field of fight; but their disestablishment in that way came about long before the day of Mr. Miall. Boadiceas and Shan amazon leaders are too rare nowadays to have queens careering about the board as a regular thing, dealing slaughter for their less nimble spouses. The Burmese general has powers sufficient to elevate him above his men, and is yet not so loftily supreme as the mail-clad knights of romance; while if he is laid low, it is not too violent a change

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CHAPTER XXXVIII

GAMES

A VERY favourite game with Burmans of all ages is the gônnyinto pwè. The name is very suggestive. Gôn or hkôn means to jump, and nyin is to deny or bluster, and there is no doubt of the fitness of the implication. A more noisy and contentious game, not even omitting the uproariousness of the English enormities known as grab or pit, it would be difficult to find. Most writers on Burma have passed over gônnyinwaing lightly, as a simple, harmless, children's game. It would be well if it were only that, though the monks at the pôngyi kyaung often sally forth in great wrath (most dangerous for their future state), and armed with a stout bamboo, to put a stop to the clamorous disputes of the schoolboys over their seeds. But the police officers would tell a very different tale. Grown-up men play also, the quarrels sometimes end in assault and murder, and always in reckless gambling. Beinshu, opium-eaters, who with all respectable Burmans stand for types of iniquity, a kind of epitome of vice, often have as much as two or three hundred rupees on a single game, and the results of unrestrained gambling are best known to civilised people who frequent Monte Carlo. Consequently the police keep a sharp eye on grown-up gônnyinto players, and if a party is caught, they are all punished heavily for gambling, the daing, or keeper of the ground, being fined heaviest of all. For there are regular alleys kept for the purpose, the daing, or proprietor, carefully smoothing the ground, moistening it delicately in the hot weather, and keeping it from getting sodden during the monsoon. He charges his customers a small fee for the right to play, usually an anna in the rupee,

524 524 525 579 733 524

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524 red or green on the board. In this latter case you lose your throw. The game is won by returning home first. Thus the first player having rounded *g*, comes down the middle course and finishes at *h*; the second player at *i*; the third at *j*, and so on. Any number can play, and if there are four, or more, and even numbers, partnerships are formed. When three or more play, it is called mèthida.

525 The game is simple and harmless enough, and as there is little chance of gambling over it, pasit is but little in favour with people in the big towns. Tônbu lein, cheating with the weight of the lime used in betel-nut chewing, is much more to their taste. This lime, a little of which is smeared on the leaf of the betel-vine that wraps round the nut, is, if of fine quality, often sold by its weight in rupees. Two confederates arrange a speculation together. One of them picks out an eligible-looking bumpkin in the street, some rice-farmer, who has come in with his boat-load of paddy; or a raftsman, who has brought down a lot of teak logs; or a pious man come to worship at the pagoda. He gets into conversation with the intended victim—asks him for a light for his cheroot, perhaps, and brings round the talk to tônbu. Then he says he has got a fine sample of it, and draws a packet out of his pocket. The unsuspecting taw-tha admires it and is asked how much he thinks there is. He guesses three rupees weight. The speculator happens, singularly enough, to have a little pair of scales in the folds of his waistcloth. The lime is duly weighed, and the countryman proves to be right—Burmans have a natural faculty for estimating by the eye. The scales and the lime are put away, when up comes the confederate, who has been loitering about at a distance. He pretends to recognise a friend in our farmer, with his old-fashioned zig-zag paso and red-tanned face. After explanations he asks who his friend—the man with the tônbu—is. The latter immediately introduces himself, produces his lime again, and asks the newcomer how much he thinks there is. He says right off, "Two rupees weight"; our taw-tha breaks in, "No there isn't." "Bet you a-seit (a quarter century, twenty-five rupees) there is." All Burmans love gambling, and the farmer straightway tables his pieces, thinking he has got rather a "soft" thing.

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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The scales come into use again, and the lime weighs two rupees—it is another packet. That night the two rascals are drunk together, and the farmer makes an offering to the nats, persuaded that there is something supernatural in the matter.

Pitch and toss is common enough in Rangoon now, as is also the three-card trick, introductions of Western industry. Pitch and toss is called myauk pan—myauk is the lion and unicorn on the old "Jan Kumpani's" coin, while the pan, the "flower," is the laurel wreath on the other side. Two rupees or pice are spun, and the bystanders call. One says two tails, and if they turn up, he wins double his stake; similarly if he is equally fortunate as to his guess of two heads. If he hedges with a head and tail, he only wins what he laid. The "tossing shilling," and the "lucky penny," of Box and Cox, one of which had no head and the other two, are not by any means novelties in the Pabèdan and other disreputable streets in Rangoon.

Another sleight-of-hand trick at which the town loafers are very skilful and are constantly deluding the unwary, is a performance called kyotothi, tilting at the string. A narrow strip of hide is doubled across, and the doubled end being in the centre, it is wound round and round in a complicated way. Then one of the bystanders is asked to place either his finger or a stick into the centre. The thong is then unwound, and if the man has his finger in the doubled-up end he wins, otherwise the manipulator gathers up the money. It is obvious that manual dexterity may do a great deal in a venture of this kind, and the operator usually makes a good thing of it.

Cock-fighting is also a favourite pastime, and though forbidden by the authorities, is still carried on more or less openly in country villages and quiet streets in the towns. Thibaw's uncle, the deposed Pagān Min, who died of small-pox in 1880, was so fond of the practice that he went by the name of the cock-fighting king. In sporting villages pretty nearly every house has its kyet-hpa, or its taik-kyet, he latter, splendid-looking birds, being bred specially for eir pluck in fighting.

Buffalo fights, which used to be great festivals in the

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Fytche, holding out the inducement of increased customs dues from the newly started Irrawaddy Flotilla Company's steamers, persuaded his majesty to give up all the monopolies, except those of earth oil, timber, and precious stones; and to agree to a uniform import and export duty on all other goods and merchandise, passing between British and Burmese territory, of five per cent *ad valorem*. This treaty lapsed in 1877 and was not renewed. Nevertheless, King Mindôn did not renew the monopolies.

When his son came to the throne, he issued, or there was issued for him, a proclamation, stating that he was going to adopt Western forms of government, and expressly announcing that he had no intention of reviving the monopoly system. He was, however, with his wild, extravagant habits, very soon in as great monetary difficulties as his father, and from 1880 began steadily to sell monopolies and give grants of forest land for hard cash payments. The new monopoly buyers, haunted by a fear of British interference, and not by any means assured in their minds as to the stability of Thibaw Min's rule, were anxious to get as much money as they could, and therefore paid only the most absurdly low prices for produce. The cultivators, finding all their labour in vain, began consequently in large numbers to give up farming or working in the forests, the consequence of which was a still further shock to the trade with British Burma and an entire inability on the part of the population the following year to pay the house-tax. Besides the monopoly system derived from his predecessors, Thibaw Min also hit on the notion of lotteries for the replenishment of his treasury. The system worked very well for a time, and brought in great quantities of money, but latterly the loose coin of the populace had all been netted, and the lottery source of revenue was pretty nearly worked out. In 1879 and 1880 Mandalay was simply flooded with lottery-offices, each under the superintendence of a minister of high rank. Those who were able to show the king the most money were highest in the royal favour, and consequently the rivalry between these worthies ran very strong. All manner of dodges were tried to entice speculators away from all other offices to the minister's own. The Hpaung-wun,

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Myowun, the lord high admiral, and lord mayor's establishment was generally admitted to be the largest and best, and it was certainly he who first began to try and allure the people. He secured the old custom-house buildings for his office, and enclosed a wide expanse round about it with a strong bamboo fence. Porous pots of deliciously cool drinking water, each pot supplied with a number of tin mugs, were arranged on stands all round the sides. The antisoporific letpet, the gigantic, but soothing, green cheroot, and the good betel lay in great heaps on the tables everywhere, and vanished with extraordinary rapidity. A dozen or more punkahs were hung up and worked by coolies, so as to calm the brains and cool the heated faces of excited clients. Later on, when other wuns and letthondaw copied his methods, the resourceful Hpaungwun added bands of music, dancing girls, and even regular dramatic performances, kept up perpetually, to the other attractions of his place of business. Some managers strove to get the better of their neighbours by giving the people unlimited supplies of palm-toddy, in the hope that the heady liquor might induce them to risk their last coins. Others hit upon the device of returning one pice—about one farthing—on each ticket taken. Others again, desperate at the thought of being unable to render a good account to their royal master, engaged gangs of bullies, who went about threatening people with violence or false accusations in the law-courts if any but their master were patronised, while the Zegyodaw Myowun, U Tha O, in virtue of his official position as keeper of the markets, sent his subordinates to the Chinese gambling-house keepers, and forced them to subscribe periodically for fifty tickets at a couple of rupees each, if they hoped to retain their gambling licenses. Fired by his example, the Yaw Shwedaik and Taingda atwinwuns also made use of their court influence to draw subscribers. Brokers and traders of all nationalities who had business with the palace were put down for a couple of hundred tickets or so, on pain of losing their contracts. One of the wundouks was advanced and heedless enough to select the Dhammayôn, a place of worship and prayer, for his lottery-office. All the old lines were upset. Drawings were held whenever the

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lists were filled up, no matter whether it was an uboné, or a more sacred feast, and, as a consequence, the minds of the people were kept in a state of perpetual unhealthy excitement.

Neither buyers nor sellers were to be seen in the bazaar. Cultivators sold off their farming stock and implements, and launched all their money into the state lotteries. Fathers sold their daughters, and husbands their wives, to have a final try for fortune, until the lottery managers issued a notice that they would give no more tickets in exchange for women. To fill up the totals faster, and draw in every available coin, twenty, or even more, people were allowed to club together to buy a single ticket. Business was entirely suspended, and all the people hovered about the lottery-offices, longing for the drawing, while cleaned-out speculators prowled about day and night, watching for an opportunity to thieve and rob. How it was that the plundered people did not rise against the government, or at least against the lottery managers, is a mystery, but they did not. The suburbs of Mandalay were filled for a time with ruined gamblers, until the soldiery were employed to drive them farther afield, when many made their way to the frontier, and recouped themselves by raids on British Burma villages. Eventually money failed, or the people were disillusionised, and the lottery-offices, though several remained open, drove but a very slight trade. Then Thibaw Min had to resort to other measures to meet his expenditure, and from July 1881 began disposing of monopolies right and left. Having finished the export monopolies, he commenced with those on imports. The British trade with Upper Burma was being steadily ruined, and the war which ended in the extinction of the kingdom of Burma was made inevitable.

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763 Death and Funeral Observances. The decline of the human body is regarded simply as part of the inevitable course of nature. When this occurs, the soul must leave. The butterfly is the symbol of life; when one dies, 'the butterfly leaves the body.'

When death approaches, valuables, such as jewelery, are removed from the person and the death-bed, because people are reluctant to use anything with which a person dies. These things are given to the monastery. A relative chants as the person is dying, to fix his mind upon the truths of Buddhism and to divert it from worldly goods and ties of kinship.

764 As soon as death occurs, everyone present cries and wails. Sometime before rigor mortis sets in, relatives bathe the corpse, using a new water pot for this purpose, and pouring the water over the body from foot to head, the opposite direction from that practiced by the living. If the water pot must be refilled at all, this must be done an odd number of times. The pot is then put outside the house, upside down, and anyone outside the family of the deceased may take it. Then another filled pot is placed underneath the bed of the corpse. His hair is dried and spread out, hanging loose. His jacket is put on backwards; his longyi is tucked in or tied at the back instead of the front. The two large toes are tied together, as are the thumbs; the arms are folded on the breast; and the body is covered with a white sheet. Money may also be placed in the mouth. This practice is sometimes attributed to the practice of earlier times when, it is said, bodies were simply abandoned; the belief is that then the deceased had to walk to the cemetery, where the grave-digger buried him and took the coins from his mouth in payment.

The corpse must be watched at night; groups take turns at this duty. It is said that the night watch is kept to prevent malevolent spirits from stealing the body. An impending funeral may be the occasion for a pwe, an outdoor [525] theatrical presentation, and gambling games. In such event, the proceeds from the gambling will go to the bereaved family to help them. The corpse, in a coffin, will be placed on a bier nearby the scene of the pwe. It is said that thus he does not become lonely.

Burial occurs as soon as the relatives can conveniently gather together. While the body lies in state there is open house for those who wish to come to pay their last respects. When ready for burial, the body is placed in a wooden coffin, and a sheet is placed over the coffin. The water pot, taken from beneath the bed, is carried behind the coffin as it is taken out. Water is sprinkled on the floor until the party is out of the house, at which point the pot is broken. The body is carried feet first towards the cemetery. As it is lowered into the grave, the relatives kneel and make obeisance. On the return trip from the cemetery one member of the party is required to carry the sheet and to refrain from looking back.

By the time the funeral party reaches the house the bed has been cleared away for disposal. A white cloth is spread on a mat in one corner of the room. The person bearing the cloth says, as if talking to the deceased, 'There is your seat.'

On the sixth day after death, the person who placed the white cloth for the deceased to sit on, carries a paper umbrella to the cemetery and sticks it into the grave, saying, 'I have come to call you for tomorrow's ceremony.' If the umbrella remains upright it means the deceased will return as requested.

for an adult and 8 annas for a child."

In camp U Myaing does not play cards very much except when at funerals to pass the night away. His total stakes on such occasions are only about eight annas or a rupee. He has never been to the races, and he never goes about town for fun. He does not go visiting much except when on business. When he does go, he visits Hla Shin, his first cousin who lives in HSIN-MYIN-KWET-THIT, and his cousin Ma Sein Naing who lives in Ahlone. In Rangoon there are about 40,000 to 60,000 refugees from Pantanaw district. Sometimes he visits other people whom he knew at the village. However, in a single year his purely social visits to people outside of the camp totals only three visits - one visit each to three houses.

Dr. Orr, Dr. Sheppard, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Musgrave are the only white men he has met. He does not know any other Americans or Englishmen.

U Myaing has not gone to the pagoda once in the present month. During the past month, when he was working at the Jubilee Hall, he used to cross the pagoda platform twice a day going to and coming from his work. In the last year he donated some money at the Shwe Dagon. He gave 2 annas on three occasions four annas on 6 occasions, and once, when he drew his monthly pay, he donated a rupee. Apart from these, he donated money 6 or 7 times during the first one or two months of their arrival, during the time when he was going around selling mats. He gave altogether three or four rupees in these six or seven times.

Only Daw Aw Zar regularly goes to the pagoda solely for the sake of worship and prayer. Ma Aye Myaing has been there about five times on three occasions, but, they were while she was on her way elsewhere, and only once or twice purely for worship. Her total offerings amount to only about a rupee. Daw Aw Zar remarked that they would not have had the opportunity of praying at this great pagoda if they were still in Pantanaw. Daw Aw Zar gives offerings of flowers, money, candles and incense, and goes up the pagoda frequently.

In his worship, U Myaing recites the 5 SILAS. He prays for

572 The friendships he[1] has made with other workers do not seem to be
369 very deep or very lasting. In Pathwe the workers were all friends,
and even included his relatives as well. There are not many
strangers in Pathwe and even people not connected by blood ties were
treated like relatives.

369 "In Rangoon the seller takes a profit on everything we have
426 to buy for food; items like rice, vegetables and fruits. Of course
444 he cannot be blamed, because he has a living to earn too. He gives
wage-earners goods on credit, but charges an interest on those goods!
In Pathwe U Myaing could get most of the necessary food without
having to pay any interest or middlemen's profits since he bought
straight from the producer. In Rangoon all people who earn monthly
wages are the same. They have to take goods on credit. Those who
do not earn regular salaries are allowed credit, but they have to
undertake to settle accounts by a fixed date.

●525 During the TAGU month festival, U Myaing gambled for money.
527 He has gambled to stakes as high as three hundred rupees, but never
up to one or two thousand. In Pathwe they had this on the PAYA-GYI-
DAUNG side, and U Myaing joined in whenever he came across in other
villages a group who were playing while on business. When he was
young he gambled away Rs. 700/- while on a trip to KYANGIN. They
were all of them on the same boat and he lost that amount at DANUBYU.
But by the time they reached YANGOON he had recovered his money. The
games they played were poker and HO-HEK.

525 In their village they had people who held fights between game
541 cocks. U Myaing never bred any of these fowls but he has placed
bets on them several times, small bets to the value of four or five
rupees. There is no special announcement made but word gets around
that there is to be a match at such and such a place on such and
such a day, and at the appointed time the villagers who are interested
all congregate at that spot.

There are bookmakers among the assembled villagers who are
willing to take any bets on either side. Cock fighting is carried
on during the months of PYATHO and TABODWE. And even then they have
it during only four or five days in the month. U Myaing does not go
to every meeting. In the prime the ground is wet for game cock-fighting

2 [i.e., U Myaing -- ANALYST]

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BOAT RACES: There are different kinds of boat races - e.g. in some one single rower is pitted against another. In others the boats carry three rowers each and in yet others six to eight rowers on each side. If the crafts differ in weight the lighter one is made heavier to equalise the two. The race is held between two contestants only. These race meetings are held towards the rains during the months of WASO, WAGAUNG, TAZAUNGMON and THADINGYUT. In the hot season the water in the river subsides and makes it not very suitable for boat racing. During these four months, boat races are held once every three or four days and sometimes for several days in succession. The people who participate as contestants have an added interest in the outcome of the match as they also bet coconuts or money against their opponent. This is a direct transaction and not carried out through a bookmaker. It is more in the nature of a personal wager between the two. In the case of the races where there are six to seven rowers in each boat, the stakes reach three or four hundred rupees. [525]

U Myaing rowed in one of these boat races when he was a young man. On that occasion he was awarded a draw. The boat that wins two successive runs wins the match. If not they are made to compete up to a total of four runs. If each of the boats alternately reach the winning post first for a total of four, then the match is declared a draw. At each of these boat races, about a thousand people attend and watch the proceedings from three o'clock to five or six in the evening. When the wager between the contestants takes the form of coconuts, cheroots, etc., the winner invites the loser and others to come and share his winnings after he has cooked the coconuts into coconut-rice, etc. [525]

Sports are held in some years towards the beginning of the cold season sometimes when there are big charities being held. There are individual races between paired men and between paired ponies. There are about 900 to a thousand spectators, and these races are held on the same principles as that of the boat races with the same rules for selection of winners and placing of bets.

These races sometimes take the form of a contest between two villages. These are big affairs with two to three thousand rupees [521]

being involved in bets. For this purpose special rowers are trained and fed by one or another of the big betters. These men are so strong and skilful that they can drive a boat carrying fifty to sixty baskets of paddy clear over a raft of a hundred bamboos tied together. A stop watch is used to time performances and a match may be arranged with another village. A rower by the name of NGA THIT once won over three thousand rupees for their village. U Myaing's share was three or four rupees. Some people in the village do not bet at all, others bet about forty to fifty rupees. 526 [525]

THE GREASED POLE: The greased pole is an amusement set up during the month of TAZAUNGMON for the KAHTEIN festival and the month of KASON for the NYAUNG-YE-THUN-BWE festival. On these occasions, besides other festivities a huge thick bamboo pole is made smooth at the joints and set upright. Then a bowl of greasy liquid such as THAYAW water (shampoo) or lard is perched towards the top of the pole in such a manner as to send the greasy liquid coursing down the pole with every slight shake it is given. On the top of the pole are placed several prizes such as items of clothing. After this people are free to get the prizes if they can. They get on one another's shoulders to reach the top. Sometimes they are successful and sometimes all of them come tumbling down. U Myaing tried this when he was young. At one KASON festival U Myaing and three others tried to reach the top by co-operating with each other but they were unsuccessful. Others try all sorts of ways such as daubing the body with mud etc.

In the village there are few entertainments, so that even if two bullocks start to fight in the fields, someone yells out the news and everyone comes out to watch. However, special matches are not arranged in their locality. [517]

There was not much of social visiting back in Pathea. Most of the visits were on business and the host proffered things such as prepared dried fish and other trifles. The talk centers around NGAPI and NGA-CHAUK. There are no visits made just because he is feeling dull and bored, although there are some people in the village who do so. 574 521

The whole family goes to the ANYEIN or marionette shows

25; Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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388. BULLOCK RACING.

in the ring and slaps his arm (*lemmáung-kat*) to the exclamation of *yáuk-kyá! bátha!*—man that you are and son of a man! (No. 153). When some one steps into the ring to take up the challenge, the pair are conducted by seconds to the judges, who decide if they are fairly matched; they then stand aside to await their turn. Every kind of attack is fair except pulling hair and biting; a cap is tied on the head to keep the long hair from coming loose. The first trace of blood betokens defeat, but matches are very frequently drawn. This may be the reason why there is no betting. Powerful seconds are on the alert to separate the combatants if they show temper. But the absence of temper, despite the severity of the contest, is its conspicuous feature. The frank dispositions of Burman and Taláing appear to rare advantage. The high spirits of the victor overflow in chivalrous deprecation of his prowess—"the merest fluke in the world!" That among such a people the sense of personal honour is keen goes without saying. Abuse is not so cheap as in India. The *vendetta* is unknown. Fatal quarrels occasionally arise from jealousy; the old national justice put the law into the hand of a betrayed husband.

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Pony-racing is the sport of the North, as boat-racing is that of Pegu with its network of channels. The races are run in heats of twos, like all races in Burma. There are small stakes for the owners, but betting is the soul of the sport. In this the women freely participate. The course is flat, half

389. THE BOAT-RACE GOAL (PAN).

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

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[562]

408. CHINESE DICE (NIDAUNG).

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ment associated with sot (*ayet-thauk*), next after which is *beinze* —opium-eater. Women do not often play chess or cards; they have a game called *pasit* (beetle-fight), somewhat resembling back-gammon.

Games of pure hazard are in great favour, especially at festival times. Chinese and Shan settlers start gambling-dens for the dissolute youth, with Chinese dice (*Nidaung*, *Angalôn*, No. 406), and the thirty-six animal lottery (*tl*, *thônzè-chaukkaung kazà*), symbols intelligible to every nation and the meanest capacity. For *angalôn* there is a paper or cloth with compartments for six different figures of animals on which money is staked, corresponding to similar figures on a wooden cube, which is shaken in a box.

541 The showmen in Burma are the conjuror and the snake-charmer. The Burman juggler (*myet-hlè sayà*) makes no pretence of occult powers, not even to children. His name implies that his movements "elude the eye;" but his legerdemain does not attain to the art of the Indian and Chinese jugglers. The snake-charmer, on the other hand (*ôlambè sayà*), pretends to be protected by magic. He is tattooed all over with snakes; he has slits at the side of his tongue which he shows, and in other ways he plays upon credulity. It has been alleged that the snake-men inoculate themselves with the venom, but this is not authenticated, though it is known from the experiments of Calmette and Fraser that immunity can be produced in this way. The cobra (*mwye-hauk*) is exhibited, but only when the hamadryad (*nganbôk*), a much larger species of the same family, cannot be procured (p. 96). The snakes are exhibited in their natural

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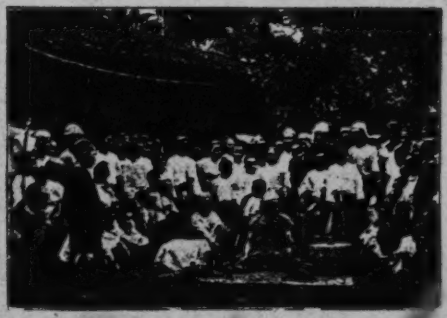

409. BURMAN JUGGLER.